

VIA FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION: 571.273.8300

Tyco 18094 (AT 20958-1031)
PATENT**Remarks**

Claims 1, 3-12 and 14-39 remain pending in the present application, of which claims 7, 11, 18, 22-23 and 25-39 have been withdrawn from consideration. It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims define allowable subject matter.

The examined claims have been rejected under 35 USC § 103 as being unpatentable over Nurmi (USP 6,608,251) in view of Creze and Chen. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for reasons set forth hereafter.

First, a prima facie case of obviousness has not been properly set forth in the Outstanding Office Action. All of the examined claims have been rejected based on a combination of three references. However, at least with respect to the independent pending claims 1, 12 and 24, the Office Action fails to identify the deficiencies of the primary reference Nurmi. Nor does the rejection set forth how the secondary and tertiary references of Creze and Chen make up for the deficiencies of the primary Nurmi reference. Further, no motivation has been provided, nor support for any such motivation within the prior art, that would have motivated the person of ordinary skill to modify Nurmi in a manner necessary to render obvious the claimed invention. Instead, it is maintained in the Outstanding Office Action that "in absence of any showing of criticality by applicant, to form the arch-shaped elements are pitched at an acute angle with respect to the centerline would have been obvious of motivation since such change solves no stated problem." It is not necessary for the applicant to establish criticality in the instance matter for the pending claims to be patentable. Instead, it is the examiner's burden to establish a prima facie case of obviousness by identifying the teachings and deficiencies of the primary reference, as well as a proper basis and motivation for modifying such primary reference in a manner that would render obvious the claimed invention. This has not been done and thus the obviousness rejection is improper.

Further, it is submitted that the claimed structure does afford advantages over the prior art as enumerated in the present application. For example, see paragraphs 42 and 43 that explain

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that slanting the arch-shaped elements predispose the reaction of the arch-shaped elements. When a pin is inserted, the arch-shaped elements pivot or flex at the linking portions when a mating contact engages the bridge portions of the arch-shaped elements. The reaction of the contact is such that when a pin is received in the contact, it is less likely that the contact will be damaged such as from buckling of the legs. The claimed configuration also facilitates a reduction in peak insertion forces for the connector.

Claim 1 recites an electrical contact comprising a conductor, comprising a series of arch-shaped elements that are continuously formed with one another. The arch-shaped elements are aligned transverse to, and are pitched at an acute angle with respect to, a centerline. The arch-shaped elements each have leg portions joined by a bridge portion. Each bridge portion is configured to engage a mating contact.

The prior art fails to teach or suggest any such structure. As previously explained, the EMI gasket 20 of Nurmi does not include arch-shaped elements that are pitched at an acute angle with respect to a centerline. Nor does the EMI gasket 20 include arch-shaped elements that aligned transverse to the centerline. The EMI gasket 20 does not have leg portions joined by bridge portions that are configured to engage a mating contact. As clearly shown in Figure 4a, Nurmi's contact is formed with a series of circular rings that are joined with linking portions. Each circular leg is not comprised of leg portions joined by a bridge portion. Instead, each circular ring has a uniform diameter and even contour. The circular portions of Nurmi's EMI gasket 20 are separated by a longitudinal gap that receives a printed circuit board 43.

Further, the secondary references fail to make up for the deficiencies in Nurmi. Creze describes an electrical connector element having a succession of straight portions 11, 12 that are connected by bent portion 13. However, the straight portions 11 and 12 extend along an axis (shown in Figure 3a). The straight portions 11, 12 and bent portions 13 form a circular cross section as shown in Figure 3b. In contrast, the claimed invention clearly defines each arch-shaped element to have a pair of leg portions joined by a bridge portion, where each arch-shaped element traverses a centerline and where each arch-shaped element is pitched at an acute angle

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with respect to the centerline. In Creze, the centerline does not traverse any combination of the straight portions 11, 12. Claim 1 further recites that each bridge portion is configured to engage a mating contact. In Creze, the pin 3 is inserted into a cavity form between the straight portions 11, 12. Claim 1 clearly defines each bridge portion as being engaged by a mating contact by along a direction traversing the center line. In Nurmi, the mating contact extends parallel to and along the center line.

Chen illustrates an entirely different structure and relates to a device for mounting computer extension slot covers. Thus, even if combined, the teachings of Nurmi, Creze and Chen fail to render obvious the claimed invention.

Claim 12 is also patentably distinct over the prior art. Claim 12 defines an electrical connector having a body and a contact. The contact includes a conductor folded into a series of arch-shaped elements that are formed continuous with one another and extend along a center line. The arch-shaped elements are oriented at an acute angle with respect to the center line and each arch-shaped element has a pair of leg portions joined by a curved bridge portion. Each arch-shaped element is arranged in parallel planes. The leg portions of adjacent arch-shaped elements are joined to one another on alternating sides of the arch-shaped elements by linking portions. The bridge portions engage mating contacts, while the linking portions flex. As explained above, the prior art fails to teach or suggest any such combination.

Claim 24 is believed to patentable for reasons set forth above with respect to claims 1 and 12.

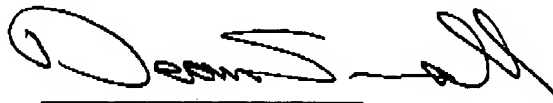
Further, it submitted that the dependent claims define additionally patentably distinct features.

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In view of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the prior art fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention. Should anything remain in order to place the present application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully Submitted,



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